

REMARKS

This response is intended as a full and complete response to the above referenced Office Action. Prior active claims 53-70 and new claims 71-73 read on the elected species shown in Figure 4.

For the convenience of the Examiner and clarity of purpose, Applicants have reprinted portions of the substance of the Office Action in indented margins and bold font. Applicants' arguments immediately follow in regular font.

3. Claims 53-64, 66, 67 and 70 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by either Jones (U. S. Pat. No. 6,195,825) or Back et al. (U. S. Pat. No. 6,269,667).

Re claim 53, for example, note the permeate (as at 34 in Jones and as at 15 in Back) and retentate (as at 44 in Jones and as at 16 in Back). Re claims 54, 58 and 68 see col. 3, line 44 thru col. 4, line 21 in Back and see col. 3, line 64 thru col. 4, line 33 in Jones.

Re claim 59 and 61, note that Jones discloses 50% as at col. 6, line 18. Re claim 55 Jones and Back disclose the filter.

The Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. Claim 53 and new independent claim 72 recite, among other things, a flow path and accompanying steps through a rinse loop where rinse effluent is allowed to return to the wash vessel, and a flow path through a wash loop where wash permeate after filtration is allowed to return to the wash vessel, and where the rinse loop is an independent flow path from the wash loop. These aspects are not taught, shown, or suggested in the cited references. The dependent claims in combination with the independent claims are also not taught, shown, or suggested for these and other reasons.

Jones teaches a wash loop that can filter and return wash effluent, not a rinse loop. Further, *Jones* specifically teaches away from the present invention when it states, “[o]nly unheated fresh water is used for the rinse cycle. . .” (Abstract and col. 2, ll. 64-65.) Similarly, *Back* has no rinse loop, independent or otherwise, as in the present invention. *Back* uses wash effluent after filtration for rinse water and then discards the rinse effluent

after rinse. (Col. 4, ll. 44-47.) *Back* also does not teach a “wash loop” as the term is used and shown in the present invention, because *Back* only uses wash effluent to rinse, not wash. Further, *Back* does not teach a flow path between the rinse effluent and the wash effluent, as claimed specifically in dependent claims 71 and 73.

5. Claims 65 and 69 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jones or Back et al.
Claim 65 and 69 define over Jones and Back only in the recitation of the specific number of nine loads laundry. Nonetheless, Jones and Back disclose that the several subsequent loads may be washed. To employ nine, is deemed to be an obvious extension of the teaching of Back and Jones.

The Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. As stated above, *Jones* teaches a wash loop and accompanying steps, not a rinse loop. *Jones* uses fresh water for the rinse. *Back* specifically uses wash water for the rinse and states after the wash and rinse “the feed reservoir, which contains the gray water generated during the wash and rinse process can now be removed from the washer system and discarded.” (Col. 4, ll. 44-47.) Neither reference teaches, shows, or suggests the rinse loop and accompanying steps recited in the present claims.

Thus, none of the cited references teach, show, or suggest the claims as presented. The Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejections and allow the remaining claims.

CONCLUSION

Claims 53-73, with independent claims 53 and 72, are currently pending in this application, with claims 53-70 being currently rejected. Claims 53, 55, and 58 have been amended, and claims 71-73 added, and Applicants submit that each claim presented herein is patentable. A timely notice of allowance is respectfully requested.

Applicants thank the Examiner for his consideration and effort on this file. If there are any questions or if additional information is needed, the Examiner is invited to telephone or email the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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